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The Friday Letter

Vol. 8 No. 16

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September 2, 1988

MPRO Staff Participates in Annual Colorado Meeting

MPRO's Special Nutrition Programs staff participated in the annual meeting of Colorado's food service staff in Alamosa, Colorado, in July. Colorado's school lunch program is 42 years old, and this was the 37th workshop held for state staff.

General assemblies, workshops, and training courses were held on the campus of Adams State College and in the nearby facilities of Alamosa High School.

Classes for lunchroom assistants covered quantity cooking, sanitation, safety, interpersonal skills, nutrition, and work simplification. A 50-hour course for managers and prospective managers—to be completed over two summers—was divided into two levels. Level one covered school lunch patterns, the food buying guide, recordkeeping, menu planning, merchandising, and sanitation and nutrition. Level two highlighted purchasing pointers, personnel management, work simplification, and safety. Third-level advanced management courses were also offered for directors, supervisors, and single-unit managers.

General demonstration sessions were also offered in baking techniques, fresh produce, salad ideas, and USDA's new recipe revisions. Assemblies heard sports nutritionist Jackie Berning, IBM executive Robert Gholson, Jan Finney of Colorado's Social Services commodity division, and Helen Dolan, director of child nutrition in National City, California.

A session on USDA's recipe cards was led by MPRO nutritionist Stella Nash, who explained the conversion charts for recipe adjustment, offered taste-testing

PROCUREMENT
CURRENT

samples made from some new recipes, and discussed substituting ingredients to lower salt, sugar, and fat intake.

—Story by Joanne Widner
MPRO Public Affairs Staff

USDA to Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Week

"Five Hundred Years of Hispanic Heritage—1492-1992: the Women's Contribution" is the theme for USDA's commemoration in support of Hispanic Heritage Week, September 11-17.

1988 begins the first of five years of celebrations marking 500 years of Hispanic influence in the Western Hemisphere. The influence began when Christopher Columbus—"Cristobal Colon" in Spanish—crossed the Atlantic with a Hispanic crew in 1492 to reach what he thought would be India.

The commemoration will include a talk on September 12 in USDA's Patio by Alicia Cuaron, president of a professional development company in Denver, CO. On September 14 specialists in recruiting will discuss methods by which minorities can be brought into the "mainstream" of employment.

Additional events include music by the Mariachi marching band of Washington, DC, on September 16 and an art exhibit in the Patio featuring Hispanic female artists.

FNS plans to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Week October 9-15.

FDPIR Held First National Conference

Representatives of 50 Indian tribal organizations attended the First National Conference of Food Distribution Programs on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The conference was hosted by the Oklahoma-New Mexico Food Action Committee for Tribes (ONFACT). ONFACT, established in April 1985 by the 19 tribes in the Southwest Region, was formed to provide a communication network for the improvement of the program.

In setting the stage for the conference, Alberta Frost, director of the Food Distribution Division, encouraged the participants to use the conference as an information exchange and as an arena, not only for voicing concerns, but to help find solutions. Mike Pruitt, ONFACT president, echoed this stage setting by calling for "work on common goals." Victor Lujan, ONFACT vice president, further highlighted this conference goal by asking the participants "to work cooperatively to solve our problems, our mutual concerns."

There were general sessions and several mini-workshops offered throughout the conference to provide time for the sharing of information and the discussion of concerns and ideas. Mike Montgomery, deputy regional administrator for the Southwest Region, told those attending, "the benefit that you

get here is consistent information from the national office outlining the policies and procedures that you need to deal with."

National policy and procedures were presented by Alberta Frost, as well as Dale Wingo, section supervisor in Procurement Allocation; Sandy Robinson, food program specialist for the Policy and Family Assistance Section; and Nancy Gaston, nutritionist in the Nutrition and Technical Services Division.



This staff was backed by representatives from Mountain Plains, Western, and Southwest regional offices. Four field offices from these regions also sent representatives.

Administrator Anna Kondratas, as a keynote speaker at the conference, said, "By inviting tribal representatives from throughout the United States, you make clear the significance you attach to the Department of Agriculture's Food Distribution Program. Such meetings also foster the strength in unity that can do so much to advance the common interests of Native Americans."

The invitations to the conference were responded to by more than 200 persons, representatives from 16 states: Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, Oklahoma, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

Plans were made to hold the second conference in Washington, DC, next year.

-Story by Judy Snow
SWRO Public Affairs Staff

Linda L. Boling, Editor
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MARO Big Cities Meet on Payment Error Rates

In the Mid-Atlantic Region, the 10 largest cities account for 41 percent of the food coupons issued and 49.3 percent of the payment errors.

This spring, MARO held a one-day seminar in Baltimore, Maryland, aimed at improving payment accuracy in the big cities. Food Stamp Program officials participated from each state in the region along with representatives from each of the region's major cities. The sole purpose of the session was to discuss and exchange tools and techniques currently being used to reduce quality control error rates in urban areas. Guest speakers from across the country were featured.

Penelope Clarke, deputy welfare director of Sacramento County, California, opened the session with a discussion of her agency's hands-on approach to error reduction. Since Sacramento's error rate has been less than three percent for more than two years, the participants were anxious to hear what made the approach so successful. Clarke said her agency focused on ways to maintain high levels of performance among staff through pride of work and other motivational techniques.

Karen Schirle, director of the Quality Control/Corrective Action Section of the Minnesota State Agency, talked about "Q Teams." This concept uses quality control reviewers to help local offices with high error rates understand why and where errors are occurring and what can be done to prevent them.

Edward Gordon, an administrative staffer from Essex County, the largest urban county in New Jersey, explained his county's new error reduction incentive technique of tying error rates to worker pay.

MARO plans to continue the initiative by establishing a region-wide payment accuracy team comprised of local, state and federal representatives. This team

will gather and develop tools and techniques for improving payment accuracy that will assist local and state agencies in the region.



(Left) Scott Dunn, deputy administrator for the Food Stamp Program, makes a point during MARO's seminar on payment error rates.

-Story and photos by Joe Dunphy
MARO Public Affairs Staff

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Penelope Clarke, deputy welfare director of Sacramento County, California, discusses payment accuracy with Ralph Picone, MARO's Food Stamp Program director.



Exchanging information about Pennsylvania's payment error rates are (left to right) Jerry Friedman, deputy secretary for income maintenance in Pennsylvania; Penelope Clarke; Dan Jeffers, director of the special eligibility unit in Philadelphia; and Harrisburg's AFDC manager Joan Hedlund.

Child Nutrition Advisory Council Holds its 32nd Meeting

The National Advisory Council on Child Nutrition recently held its 32nd meeting at the Rosslyn West Park Hotel in Rosslyn, Virginia. Assistant Secretary John W. Bode welcomed the members, saying, "the council gives us the benefit of fresh ideas and perspective and offers a voice and a vote in program policy. Thus, working together, we really do achieve what none of us could do alone."

The 19-member council, whose function is to make a continuing study of the operations of the Child Nutrition Programs to determine how these programs may be improved, made 13 recommendations which will become part of this year's biennial report to the Congress and the President.

-Story by Sandra Lefler
Child Nutrition Division
Photo by Larry Rana



Back row left to right: Dr. Neldon Mathews, Stephanie Sanderson, Laurie Rohrbach, John W. Bode, Timothy E. P. Mertz, Russ Circo, George Braley. Front row left to right: Marilyn Edwards, Judy Wolfersberger, Gerti Thomas, Gloria Tuchman, Rene Weber, Edna Carter.



**September 5, 1988
is Labor Day --**

Enjoy! Relax!

NERO NET Coordinators Meet With NERO Staff



Taking a moment for the camera are (left to right) John Magnarelli, NERO director of Special Nutrition Programs; Helen Lilly, nutritionist, and Patricia Daniels, chief of Nutrition Science and Education Branch, Nutrition and Technical Services Division; and Miguel Valdivielso, NERO deputy administrator.

A free-flowing exchange of ideas and information formed the basis of a recent Northeast Region Nutrition Education and Training Program (NET) Coordinators' Meeting held in Nashua, New Hampshire.

The two-day meeting provided Northeast Region state NET coordinators the opportunity to "brainstorm" on strategies for effectively marketing the NET Program. It also gave them a chance to air their concerns to NERO staff.

Headquarters staff members Patricia Daniels and Helen Lilly of the Nutrition Science and Education Branch, Nutrition and Technical Services Division (NTSD), were featured speakers. Daniels, branch chief, provided a legislative update on NET and its accomplishments, and discussed ways to better market the program. Lilly discussed NET funds management.

Presentations were also given by staff from the Boston Public School Department and the New England Dairy Council.

Providing opening remarks for NERO were Harold McLean, regional administrator, and John Magnarelli, director of Special Nutrition Programs (SNP). Other NERO staff attending included Miguel Valdivielso, deputy regional administrator, and child nutrition staff members Claudia Smith (meeting coordinator), Christopher Morton, Jane Quinn, Donna Rixse, and Patrick Tengwall.

-Story and photo by NERO Public Affairs Staff

Phil Turner Named SERO Food Stamp Director



Phil Turner recently came on board as the new food stamp director for SERO. He is responsible for managing and directing USDA's food stamp operations in eight southeastern states, and comes to his new position with an extensive background in managing welfare programs at the state level.

Turner began his career in welfare assistance in 1964 as a juvenile probation officer with the West Virginia Department of Human Services. From there, he was promoted to positions of increasing responsibility. He worked as a public assistance reviewer; county welfare director; assistant district administrator; state management evaluator; assistant commissioner of field operations, economic services, and personnel; and a deputy commissioner.

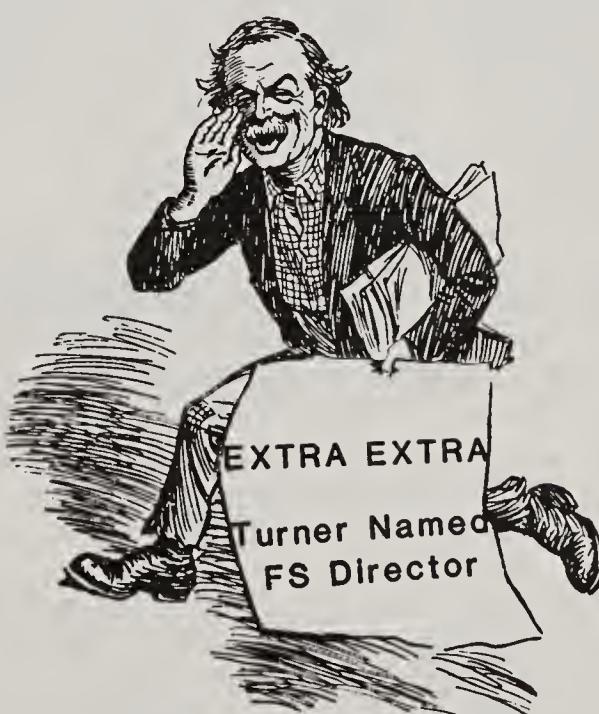
Prior to joining FNS, Turner served as executive director of the West Virginia Commission on Aging and as administrator of the West Virginia Bureau of Social Services.

Asked why he left a work situation where he "had it made" to join SERO, Turner said, "After working for 30 years at every level of the state welfare organization, I was sort of fascinated with the complexity and scope of federal welfare programs. Besides, working in the Atlanta regional office affords my wife and me the opportunity to live in a milder climate while still being relatively close to our family and friends. In a way, it's the best of both worlds. I have a challenging work situation and a great place to live."

"I think the variety of work experiences I've had gives me a fairly broad background, not only in areas of social work, but in dealing with personalities. If I've learned one thing, it's that a manager is only as good as people who work for him."

Turner, 51, holds an Associate of Arts degree from Potomac State College and a B.S. in biology and physical education from West Virginia University. His wife, Carolyn, currently is personnel director of the West Virginia Workers Compensation Fund. The Turners have three children and one granddaughter.

-Story and Photo by Connie Crunkleton
SERO Public Affairs Staff



FNS Programs Hold Interest for Foreign Officials

NERO recently expanded its international relations as it welcomed visiting officials from Taiwan and India who were interested in learning more about FNS programs.

Regional Administrator Harold McLean welcomed and later met with Wu Jen Yee, a section chief in the Department of Physical Education of the Taiwan Ministry of Education. Yee was visiting the country in an effort to learn more about large-scale administration of school nutrition and food distribution programs.



Welcoming Wu Jen Yee (right), an official from the Taiwan Ministry of Education, are NERO Regional Administrator Harold McLean (center) and Christopher Morton (left) of Special Nutrition Programs.

His fact-finding mission included taking food service management courses at the University of Massachusetts and visiting schools, state agencies, and NERO. Taiwan officials are exploring changing school feeding from a series of local, independent programs to a nationally administered one.

While on his visit to NERO, Yee was briefed on the National School Lunch Program by John Magnarelli, Special Nutrition Programs (SNP) director, and SNP staff member Christopher Morton. Steve Stathopoulos and Maureen Rankin of the Food Distribution Program provided an overview of the program.

The Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children was the source of interest for officials from India's federal and state governments and researchers from the National Institute of Public Cooperation for Child Development in Delhi, India.



NERO Regional Administrator Harold McLean (standing left) presents a history of the WIC program to visiting Indian officials as Crystal Palmer (standing right), director of the Dorchester/Roxbury WIC program, looks on.

The Indian officials were in the country for a two-week visit to learn more about public health programs. They were given a tour of the Harvard Street Neighborhood Health Center and had the opportunity to speak with participants of the Dorchester/Roxbury WIC program.

NERO staff accompanying the officials included McLean; Lynn Wonders, regional

Supplemental Food Programs director; and Maureen Conway, a WIC nutritionist.

The officials said they found the visit beneficial and were looking forward to implementing new ideas into their own supplemental feeding programs in the state of Gujarat.

SERO Bids Goodbye to IRM Chief



Crayton Lankford (left), SERO Financial Management director, bids farewell to Lou Gettis, who recently left her position as regional systems analyst in Atlanta. Lou, who has had a nationwide impact on FNS computer systems, is shown receiving a Certificate of Merit signed by Deputy Administrator for Management Joe Leo for eight years of outstanding achievements, both in the state systems and internal operations areas.

-Story and Photos by
SERO Public Affairs Staff

States Find Things in Common at Bi-Regional Conference

Buffalo, New York, was the meeting ground for a recent Bi-Regional Food Stamp Management Conference sponsored by the Northeast and Midwest Regions. The event, hosted by the New York State Department of Social Services, attracted more than 100 participants from the 13 states represented.

"It was useful to get the two regions together for the first time because it gave the larger states a chance to meet and recognize that they share some situations that otherwise would have seemed unique," said Lynda Silva, NERO Food Stamp Program director.

"There was a tremendous exchange of ideas, materials, and information between participants during the conference," said Silva. "It gave the FNS staff a chance to step back from regional concerns and take a broader view from other people's perspectives." Issues addressed included employment and training (E&T), removing barriers to participation, accuracy in case management, and welfare reform.

Opening remarks were provided by Monroe Woods, Midwest regional administrator, and Dustin Van Fleet, Midwest Food Stamp Program director.

The keynote address was delivered by Associate Administrator Sonia Crow, who emphasized the great opportunities that exist in the Food Stamp Program for the states and FNS staff to make public service a positive and rewarding experience. Crow also visited an E&T site with Harold McLean, NERO regional administrator, and Silva. Also addressing the conference was Tim O'Connor, director of Program Development Division, who provided a legislative update.



Getting acquainted during a conference break are from left to right: Karen Schimke, commissioner, Erie County (NY), Department of Social Services; Harold McLean, Northeast regional administrator; Sonia Crow, associate administrator; and Monroe Woods, Midwest regional administrator.

-Story and Photo by
NERO Public Affairs Staff

Friday Letter Vacancy Listing by Vacancy Number

JOB TITLE	AREA OF		GRADE	CLOSING	VACANCY NUMBER	OFFICE
	CONDID.	SERIES				
o Clerk Stay in Schooler	(A)	GW-303	1/2	Open	88-SIS	FNS
o Clerk Typist	(A)	GS-322	2/3/4	Open until Filled	NONE	FNS
o Secretary Typing	(A)	GS-318	4/5/6	Open	88-999	FNS
o Equal Opp Spec	(USDA)	GS-360	12	9/12/88	88-88	CR/EO
o Economist	(A)	GS-110	12/13	9/12/88	88-89	PID
o Supvry Food Prog Sp	(FNW)	GM-120	13	9/08/88	88-90	CND
o Computer Prog Anal	(FNW)	GS-334	13	9/27/88	88-91	IRMD
o Procurement Anal	(G)	GS-1102	13	9/19/88	88-92	ASD
o Food Prog Spec	(FNW)	GS-120	9/11	9/12/88	88-93	SNP
o Food Prog Spec	(FNW)	GS-120	5/7/11	9/12/88	88-95	SFPD
o Secretary Typing	(A)	GS-318	5/6	9/19/88	88-96	PED
o Mgmt Anal	(FNW)	GS-343	14	9/19/88	88-97	FM
o Secretary Typing	(FNS)	GS-318	3/4/5	9/13/88	88-98	SFPD
o Food Prog Spec	(WMA)	GS-120	9/11	9/27/88	88-99A	SFPD
o Food Prog Spec	(FNW)	GS-120	9/11	9/18/88	88-99	SFPD
o Computer Prog Anal	(A)	GS-334	12/13	9/27/88	88-100	IRMD
o Computer Prog Anal	(A)	GS-334	12/13	9/27/88	88-101	IRMD
o Budget Anal	(SWR)	GS-560	11	9/02/88	SWR-88-16	FM*

Office Location

FNS - Food and Nutrition Service
 SFPD - Supplemental Food Programs Division
 CND Child Nutrition Division
 EEO - Civil Rights and Equal Employment Opportunity
 IRMD - Information Resources Management Division
 DAM - Deputy Administrator for Management
 ASD - Administrative Services Division
 FM - Financial Management
 PID - Program Information Division
 FM* - Financial Management (SWR)-Dallas, TX

Area of Consideration

(A) - All Sources
 (G) - Governmentwide
 (L) - Local Commuting Area Only
 (FNS) - Food and Nutrition Service
 (USDA) - U.S. Department of Agriculture
 (FNW) - Food and Nutrition Service Nationwide
 (SWR) - Southwest Region - Dallas, TX
 (WMA) - Washington Metro Area